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NJMC Announces Educational Partnership Between Environment Center, Ramapo College and School Districts

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The Board of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission today directed the agency to develop a pilot Field High School that will create a unique educational partnership among environment centers, school districts, and colleges. The pilot program would be administered by Ramapo College of New Jersey through its operations in the NJMC's Meadowlands Environment Center.

“The environmental education the NJMC has invested in over recent years has paid off through a more engaged community today and a youth population poised to contribute to a more sustainable future,” said NJMC Chairman and Acting New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Charles Richman. “This sort of aggressive outreach demonstrates our commitment to public policy through comprehensive engagement with residents.”

The new Field High School would be established in a pending expansion of the MEC's current facilities in Lyndhurst that will include two laboratories and an observatory.

“With the expansion of our Lyndhurst campus, the NJMC stands ready to bring its prestigious environmental outreach program to a new level,” said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. “If we can prove the effectiveness of bringing together school districts, higher education, and environment centers into one program, this could become a powerful tool for raising a new generations of broad minded leaders who can champion this and other regions' wise growth.”

Under the proposal, high school students in the Lyndhurst School District would be offered the opportunity to participate in the pilot, with additional schools to join pending the success of the pilot.

After meeting with Ramapo College faculty, Lyndhurst School Administrators and staff, will develop courses by “Curriculum Mapping” to address school district needs and resources available at the MEC. This constitutes a shift from offering a menu of pre-existing programs – that are now available at the MEC – to tailoring programs that mesh with specific schools.

Courses will be taught jointly by high school science teachers and the staff at the NJMC's MEC. Scheduling will be arranged in accordance with the school district preference. The Field School will provide instruction to students in classes such as Environmental Science, Biology, Earth Science, Physics, General Science, Astronomy and Chemistry. Other offerings might include aquaculture, floraculture, environmental issues, alternative energy, water chemistry, archaeology, sustainability, and urban planning.

All courses will be at the high school level and will meet New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the requirements of the High School Proficiency Assessment. Individual class sizes will be limited to 24 students. Students with disabilities will be included. Students enrolled in the Teacher Education Program at Ramapo College will be scheduled to fulfill their field experience at the NJMC Field School.

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